

## A Statement by DR&HS President Judy Hall

*(The following statement by DR&HS President Judy Hall was sent to The Clipper following the recent Members on an Open Society meeting.)*

I am writing to respond to various allegations that have appeared over the last several months in press accounts and at various public meetings about my role in certain issues that are now facing the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society.

Over the last six years, I have served as a volunteer member of the Board of the Historical Society and I will complete my three-year term as President this

### For the Record

February. I am proud of the contributions that I have been able to make with the help of many hard-working Board members, volunteers, and donors to make our Historical Society one of the strongest and most creative in the Commonwealth. Over the last year, my commitment to this volunteer activity has been full-time.

Because of the strength of my commitment to the organization, I have resisted the impulse to respond to the various personal allegations that have been directed at me. I know that controversy is not healthy for any organization and that it is particularly damaging to a community-based organization that depends so much on volunteer and donor support. I believed that by responding to the allegations directed against me, I would serve only to fuel the controversy and to detract from the important goals of the Historical Society.

I now recognize that I can no longer stay silent because the goals of the Historical Society are being jeopardized by the personal attacks, which are being directed against me. Recently, published reports have labeled my efforts on behalf of the

Historical society as "unethical and illegal maneuverings" and have implied or stated explicitly that the Historical Society is acting in a manner which is contrary to its mission and to its by-laws. These false allegations can no longer be left unaddressed.

The attacks on the Historical Society and on my leadership comes from the former Executive Director and her friends who are upset by the decision made by the Board to remove the former Executive Director from her position. This decision was made on a thoughtful basis when it became apparent that the former Executive Director was unwilling to commit to the policies being established by the Board particularly with respect to the Nathaniel Winsor Jr. House project. Because the Winsor House project has been so central to the activities undertaken by the Historical Society, it was critical that our Executive Director share the Board's commitment and goal for that project. When it became apparent to the Board that the former Executive Director did not share our goal and commitment, it became necessary to make a change.

Since the action was taken by the board with respect to the former Executive Director, she and her close friends have embarked upon a campaign intended to discredit me, the current Board, and the Historical society as an institution. Allegations of "illegal or unethical maneuverings" have no basis in fact. While responsible disagreement over the Board's judgments about moving forward with the Winsor House or with removing the former Executive Director could be a fair and appropriate topic of discussion, these personal attacks spreading wild and unsubstantiated allegations are a disservice to the Historical Society.

I am pleased that in the face of the dis-

traction created by these ad hominem attacks, the Historical Society has continued to make real progress in meeting its goals. Although the opponents to the Historical Society's Board have placed impediments in the way of our current efforts to open the Winsor House, we are confident that the necessary approvals will be obtained in the near term and that the Winsor House will take its place as an invaluable resource to Duxbury and to the Historical society through the next century.

I am, of course, personally disappointed and hurt by the vituperative personal attacks that have been levied against me. Duxbury depends upon volunteers to make its various institutions run effectively and we are fortunate to have so many dedicated people throughout our town who give so much time and talent to our various organizations. It is critical that we respect the good faith and integrity of our volunteers and protect them from the kinds of personal attacks that are more reflective of the culture in Washington, DC than they are of the values of our treasured New England village.

While I now look forward to my pending and long planned departure from the Board in February, I hope that we can turn any disagreements that may exist over the direction of the Winsor House and the Historical Society away from personalities and towards substantive issues. As I prepare to complete my tenure of service as President of the Historical Society, I believe that our efforts in acquiring and working to open the Winsor House will create a lasting legacy for the current hard-working, team-oriented members of the Board and for the many individuals who have supported our efforts.

Judy Hall